

**W. Haywood
Burns Institute**

***Addressing Racial and Ethnic Disparities
through Community Engagement***

Wednesday, October 3, 2012



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**Improving Life
Opportunities for
Youth, Families,
and Communities
of Color**

The W. Haywood Burns Institute (BI)

Community Engagement Values and Principals

- The BI believes community participation improves all systems by increasing transparency, cultural integrity and power sharing.
- We have found that community stakeholders must be well-informed, data driven and strategic in order to maximize participation and achieve positive results addressing racial and ethnic disparities (RED) work.
- Community engagement should serve the overall reform effort building upon the work of the collaborative.



Community Justice Network for Youth (CJNY)

- National network of 180 organizations
 - 29 States
- Curriculum and trainings available for community coach ups
 - History of Juvenile Justice
 - Julie Through the System
- Staff can serve as a resource to jurisdictions interested in deeper level of community engagement



Juvenile Justice 101

- What is the difference between the criminal justice system and juvenile justice system?
- Retribution vs. Rehabilitation?
- Punitive vs. Restorative?
- Juvenile delinquent status vs. Charged in Adult Court

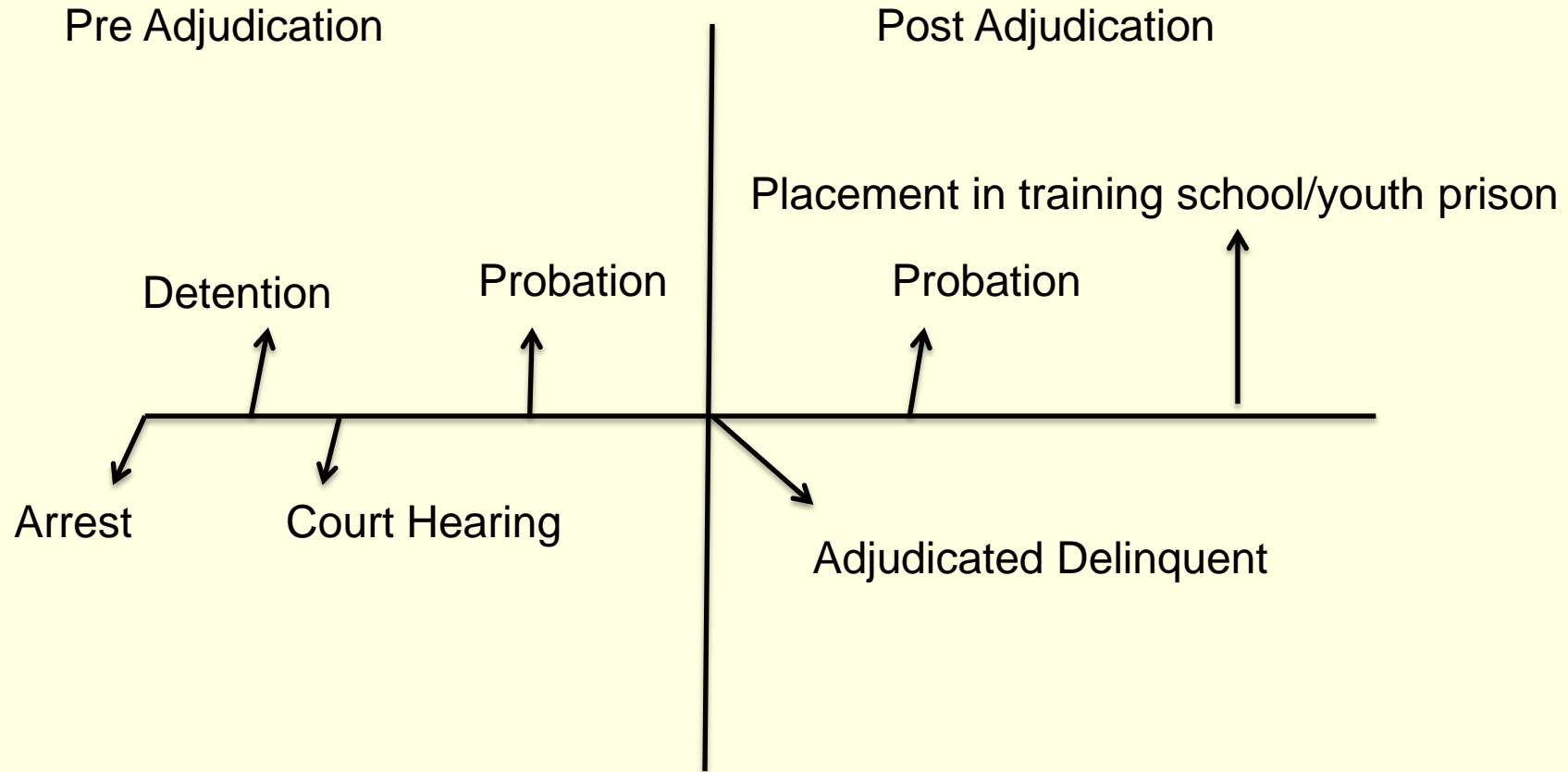


Juvenile Justice....Shopping Mall

- Call it the Juvenile Justice system however it is not a system - it is a grouping of semi autonomous agencies that have little connection to each other
- Juvenile Justice System functions more like a shopping mall
- Need to develop sophisticated understanding of how the “system” functions – system mapping



Juvenile Justice Framework



- Why do we focus on the front end of the system?



Historical Importance of Community Involvement

- Historically, juvenile justice reform has benefited from the significant contributions of community members; everyday people can fundamentally change the function, form and philosophy of juvenile justice.
 - Jane Addams
 - John Augustus



The Frame Game

- Ten years ago the notion in the field of Juvenile Justice was that this issue was the fault of the kids, their families and their communities with a quick jump to rap music, racism and poverty.
- No responsibility on the part of the system thus there was nothing that systems could do to address it
- Today the notion in the field is that systems are unaccountable to the communities they serve and must make efforts to engagement community if they are going to make progress addressing RED



Strategic Definition of Community in RED Reduction Effort

- People from the neighborhoods most affected by RED
- Individuals who have had personal experience, friends or family involved in the system
- People with professional expertise that can serve as a resource in the RED reduction efforts (Traditional Leaders / Service Providers / Advocates / Grassroots Organizations)



What is Community Engagement ?

- Community members serving as stakeholders within the RED reform effort
- Community-based organizations serving as alternatives to detention and/or interventions for system involved youth



What is Community Engagement?

- Inviting community to sit at the table within a detention reform process is a process itself
- Systems must be intentional about engaging the community
- A target population from a particular neighborhood must be identified to best engage community in a RED effort



Why Involve the Community?

- **Urgency**
- **Insight**
- **Resources**



The Role of Community Members

■ Traditional leaders

- ☐ Tend to see the big picture
- ☐ Understand the importance of compromise
- ☐ Capable of leveraging own power to keep things moving
- ☐ Often have respect for system stakeholders

■ Service providers

- ☐ Can serve as alternatives to detention/system involvement
- ☐ Often have community and system connections, however may not be in a position to push too hard for change

■ Advocates

- ☐ Possess specific knowledge and expertise of local policy, practice & legislative issues
- ☐ Can provide strategies for moving forward



The Role of Community Members

■ Grassroots Activists

- ☐ Focused on the community and the individual needs of their members
- ☐ Lean toward the people involved rather than the efficiency of the system
- ☐ Raise level of urgency
- ☐ Often highlight issues that are seen beyond the scope of traditional reform

■ Consumers: Youth and Parents

- ☐ Have the greatest level of insight regarding the experience of the local system
- ☐ Have tremendous insight into the needs of young people and resources within target neighborhoods
- ☐ May raise the level of intensity within the meeting or the process
- ☐ Are often motivated by the need to see some concrete changes to the system



What are the Responsibilities of System Stakeholders in Engaging Community?

- Logistical Considerations
- Transparency
- Power-sharing
- Open to criticism
- Education
 - Juvenile Justice & Local System 101
(policy, practice, language and culture)



Practical Considerations

- **Readiness** – Sites must take the time to do collective thinking and goal setting regarding community engagement

- **Sophistication-** Sites typically lack a sophisticated understanding of community engagement
 - Oversimplifying the role of community within the collaborative
 - Have unreal expectations that simply by engaging community, system stakeholders have done their part and now it is up to the community stakeholders to drive the process



Levels of Community Engagement

- **Community Forum**

Often jurisdictions first effort to engage community members is through hosting a community forum – providing information to the community about the detention reform work being done

- **Community Stakeholders**

Community members from neighborhoods that contribute most to detention being recruited to join the collaborative as a full voting member

- **Community Based Interventions**

Community members and organizations offer and/or are conduits to resources within neighborhoods, who can be tapped to help create and maintain community-based alternatives to formal system involvement



Burns Institute Approach to Community Capacity Building

1) Coach Up Community Stakeholders

- Juvenile Justice; DMC; and Detention Alternatives 101
- Review of past and current reform efforts

2) System and Policy Map

- Identify each agency and various decision points within their discretion
- Data regularly collected, analyzed and made public by Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Geography, and Offense (REGGO) at all decision-making points throughout the system


3) Establish Sustainability Strategy

- Community stakeholders maintain roles and voice in the collaborative
- In order to maximize involvement and efficiency, the community stakeholders may decide to form an outside vehicle, creating the opportunity for a larger number of community members to become involved in the process

Success Is Built on Relationships...

- All stakeholders must have a level of trust and respect in order to deal with tough and often emotional issues
- Tension between system and community stakeholders is often a sign of movement toward addressing deep-rooted systemic issues. Strong relationships help people struggle through the tense situations



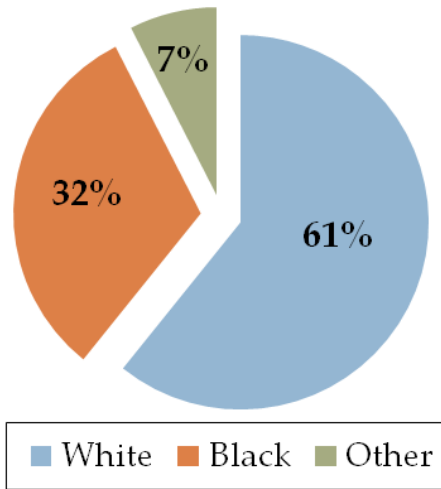


A Case Study of Success

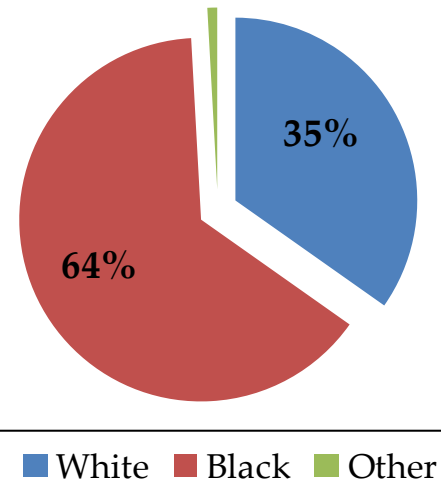
USING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO REDUCE RED

Baltimore County RED at a Glance

Baltimore County Youth Population (2006)
(ages 10-17)



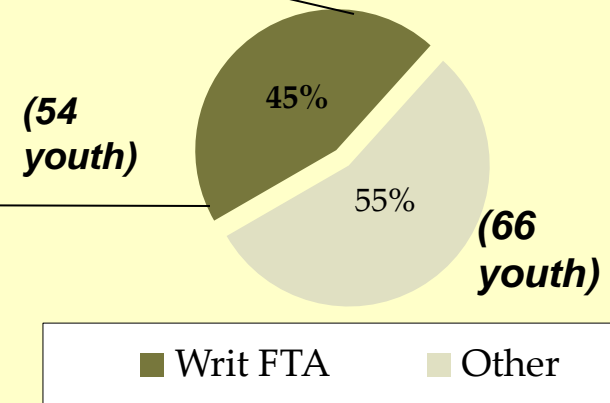
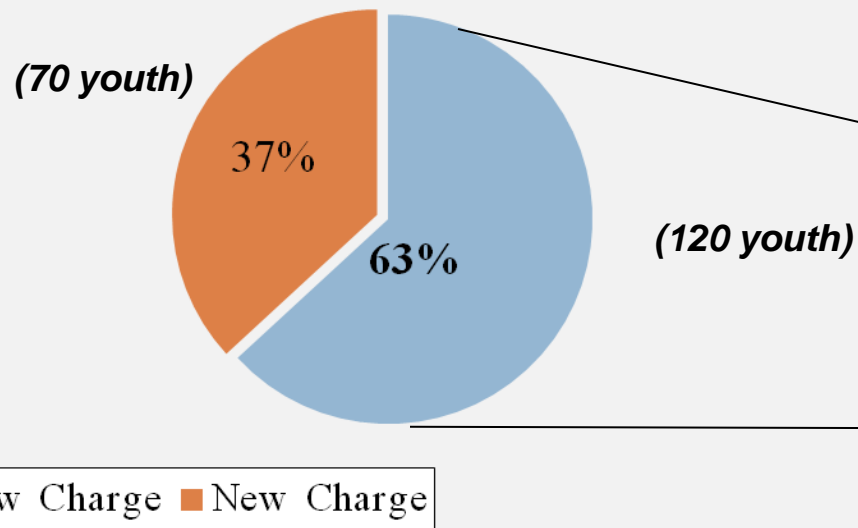
Baltimore Detention Admissions (2006)



Black youth are overrepresented in detention Baltimore County.
In 2006:

- Black youth represented **32%** of the youth population
- Black youth represented **64%** of detention admissions

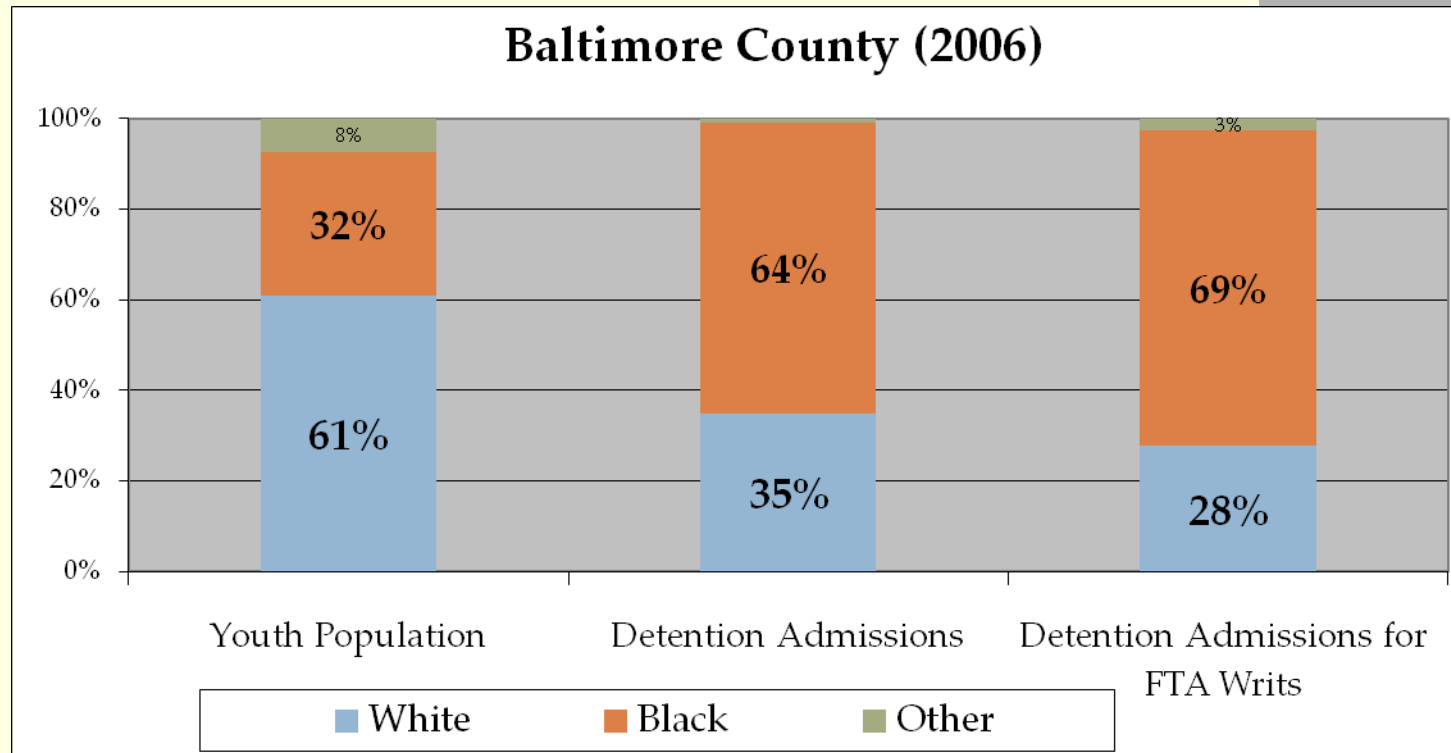
Offenses Associated with Baltimore County Secure Detention



Data Analysis revealed that:

- 63% of all admissions to detention were **not** the result of a new charge
- 45% of the "No New Charges" were the result of writs for youth failing to appear in court.

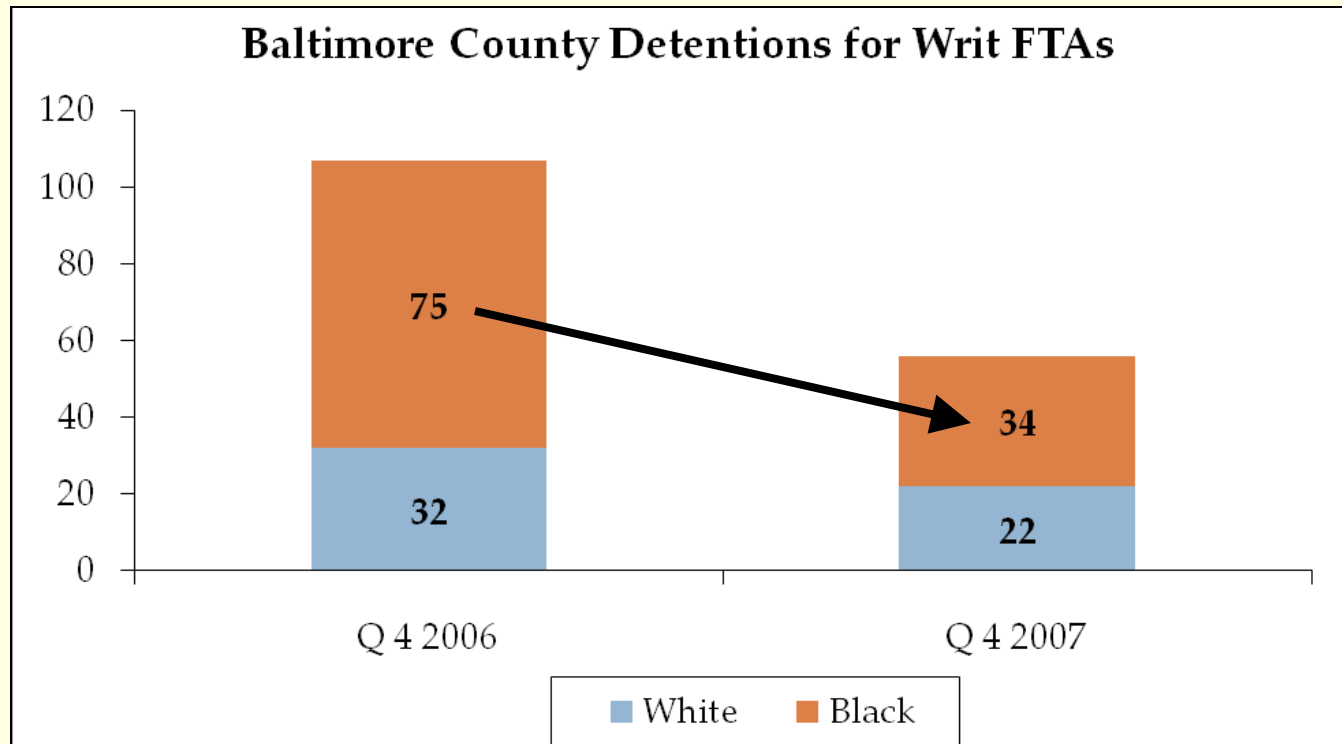
Detention Admissions for FTA Writs



Black youth represent:

- 32% of the overall youth population, but
- 64% of detention admissions generally, and
- 69% of admissions for Writs that result when youth fail to appear in court.

Baltimore County: FTA Detentions



After Burns Institute helped institute the Court Notification Program, detentions for failing to appear (FTA) decreased by 48% overall and by 55% for Black youth.



BI and CJNY

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